Laura Wood Roper

A Register of Her Papers in the Library of Congress

Prepared by Bradley E. Gernand with the assistance of Deloris Butler



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

1996

Contact information: http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/mss/address.html

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2001

2004-10-08 converted from EAD 1.0 to EAD 2002

Collection Summary

Title: Papers of Laura Wood Roper

Span Dates: 1822-1982

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1871-1895 and 1948-1952)

ID No.: MSS83853

Creator: Roper, Laura Wood, 1911-

Extent: 2,280 items; 19 containers; 9 linear feet; 10 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Abstract: Biographer of Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903). Correspondence, research notes, and related material pertaining to Roper's biography of Olmsted; correspondence, reports, clippings, printed material collected by Roper related to Frederick Law Olmsted and the landscape architectural firm, Olmsted Associates (1961-) and its predecessors; and chronological, subject, correspondent, and personal name indexes to the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers in the Library of Congress Manuscript Division.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Names:

Roper, Laura Wood, 1911-

Eliot, Charles, 1859-1897--Correspondence

Hubbard, Theodora Kimball, 1887-1935--Correspondence

Olmsted, Frederick Law, 1870-1957--Correspondence

Olmsted, John Charles, 1852-1920--Correspondence

Olmsted, Frederick Law, 1822-1903. Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted

F.L. and J.C. Olmsted (Firm: 1897-1898) Records of thte firm F.L. and J.C. Olmsted (1908-1898)

Olmsted Associates. Records of Olmsted Associates

Olmsted Brothers. Records of Olmsted Brothers

Olmsted, Olmsted, and Eliot. Records of Olmsted, Olmsted, and Eliot

Subjects:

Capitols

City planning

Exhibitions

Landscape architecture

Parks

Occupations:

Authors

Biographers

Administrative Information

Provenance:

The papers of Laura Wood Roper, biographer of Frederick Law Olmsted, were given to the Library of Congress by Roper in 1975 and 1992. The 1975 gift was included in the papers of Frederick Law Olmsted and is described in the finding aid for that collection. Her 1992 gifts comprise this collection and are described herein.

Transfers:

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Cartographic records have been transferred to the Geography and Map Division. A lithograph has been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Laura Wood Roper Papers.

Copyright Status:

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Laura Wood Roper in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or reel number, Laura Wood Roper Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Diographical Note		
Date	Event	
1911, Mar. 15	Born, St. Louis, Mo.	
1932	A. B., Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.	
1940	Married W. Crosby Roper, Jr. (died 1982)	
1943	Published Walter Reed: Doctor in Uniform (New York: J. Messner. 281 pp.)	
1944	Published Raymond L. Ditmars: His Exciting Career With Reptiles, Animals and Insects (New York: J. Messner, 272 pp.; republished, London: R. Hale, 261 pp., 1951. Published as Schlangen, Seltene Tiere und Insekten: das Forscherleben von Raymond L. Ditmars, Berlin: P. H. Ohlert. 222 pp. 1949)	
1948	Published Louis Pasteur (New York: J. Messner. 218 pp.)	
1973	Published FLO: A Biography of Frederick Law Olmsted (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 555 pp.)	

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Laura Newbold Wood Roper (1911-) span the years 1822-1982 (bulk dates 1871-1895 and 1948-1952) and include original papers of Frederick Law Olmsted and the firm Olmsted Associates. Olmsted's son, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., also a landscape architect and longtime principal of Olmsted Associates, sanctioned Roper's efforts and provided her many of the items which make up this collection from his family and office files. Most of the remainder of those files were later given to the Library of Congress and now comprise the papers of Frederick Law Olmsted and the records of Olmsted Associates. The Roper Papers also include Roper's correspondence, research notes, and related material.

The collection is organized into four series, the first of which consists of papers relating to the elder <u>Frederick Law Olmsted</u> and his works. Chiefly consisting of correspondence, reports, newspaper clippings, and related information, this series is organized by subject and concerns city planning, expositions, capitols, parks, Olmsted's business partners, and his writings. Some of Roper's additions include correspondence to or from Theodora Kimball Hubbard, a bibliographer who researched Olmsted in the 1920s.

Correspondence and reports of <u>Olmsted Associates</u> comprise the second series. Although some of the correspondence is original, there are also copies or research findings prepared for Roper's use by Stella D. Obst, longtime secretary to Frederick

Law Olmsted, Jr. Correspondents include John Charles and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and Charles Eliot. Topics include civic projects and the firm's work. There is also much biographical information about the Olmsteds, ca. 1898-1954.

The third series consists of a card file <u>index of Frederick Law Olmsted's papers</u> compiled by Roper during the years she used the papers after their arrival in the Library. The index accesses the papers <u>chronologically</u> and by <u>subject</u>, <u>correspondent</u>, and <u>personal name</u>. Since broken and missing tabs or dividers and an unorthodox format render the subject index somewhat difficult to use, its primary categories and subcategories have been listed at the end of this finding aid as an <u>appendix</u>. Arrangement of the index and thus the accompanying appendix is generally alphabetical.

Roper microfilmed most of the <u>index</u> except Containers 7 and 11 of the chronological index, covering 25 Nov. 1865-28 Aug. 1876 and 25 Feb. 1887-21 Aug. 1928, and part of Containers 16 and 17, covering part of the correspondent index and all of the personal name index. A reference file, which no longer exists in textual format, appears only on <u>microfilm</u>, and consists of excerpts and notes from secondary and some primary source materials, including books, newspapers, reports, and letters, 1822-1864.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in four series:

- Frederick Law Olmsted, 1834-1982, n.d.
- Olmsted Associates, 1894-1958, n.d.
- Indices to Frederick Law Olmsted Papers, 1865-1928, n.d.
- Microfilm, 1822-1887, n.d.

Description of Series

Container Series

BOX 1-5 Frederick Law Olmsted, 1834-1982, n.d.

Correspondence, reports, newspaper and journal clippings, printed matter, and research notes.

Arranged alphabetically by subject, type of material, or name of person.

BOX 5-6 Olmsted Associates, 1894-1958, n.d.

Correspondence and associated reports, newspaper clippings, and printed matter.

Arranged chronologically.

BOX 7-17 Indices to Frederick Law Olmsted Papers, 1865-1928, n.d.

BOX 7-11 Chronological Index, 1865-1928

Card file arranged chronologically for the years 1865-1896, 1903-1904, 1912, 1916, 1920-

1921 and 1928.

A microfilm edition of this index is limited to the years 1865 and 1876-1887 (see below).

BOX 12-15 Subject Index, n.d.

Card file arranged alphabetically by subject, name, and place category and thereunder by

subcategories.

BOX 15-17 Correspondent Index, n.d.

Card file of correspondents arranged alphabetically by name of writer or recipient.

A microfilm edition of this index is limited to the letters "A-N" and first part of "O" (see below).

BOX 17 Personal Name Index, n.d.

Card file of personal names referred to in correspondence, arranged alphabetically by name of

person.

This index has not been microfilmed.

Microfilm, **1822-1887**, **n.d.**

Microfilm of part of the chronological and correspondent indices to the Frederick Law Olmsted papers and all of the subject and personal name indices. Also microfilm of a secondary source

reference file which is not contained in the papers. Shelf number 21,458.

Container List

Container	Contents
вох 1-5	Frederick Law Olmsted, 1834-1982, n.d.
	Correspondence, reports, newspaper and journal clippings, printed matter, and research notes.
	Arranged alphabetically by subject, type of material, or name of person.
вох 1	Agricultural colleges, 1864-1866, 1949, n.d.
	André, Edouard, 1951
	Arboreta, 1928, 1954
	Articles and essays, 1844, 1893, 1928, 1948-1954
	"A" miscellaneous, 1951
	Biographical, 1866, 1884, 1893, 1903, 1918-1921, 1946, n.d.
	Books, 1882, 1941, n.d.
	Bowles, Samuel, 1875
	Brace, Charles Loring, 1874, 1890
	Burnham, Daniel Hudson, 1922
	"B" miscellaneous, 1947-1952
	Capitols
	Albany, N.Y., 1876-1880, 1886-1889
	Montgomery, Ala., n.d.
	Cemeteries, 1864-1865, 1886, n.d.
	City planning
	General, 1891
	New York, N.Y., 1858, 1864, 1881, 1889, 1916, 1933, 1948, 1965
	Riverside, Ill., 1860, 1868-1869
	Staten Island, N.Y., 1870, 1921
	Tacoma, Wash., 1975
	Washington, D.C., 1861-1864, 1874, 1882-1885, 1949
	Cleveland, Horace William Shaler, 1967-1970
	Correspondence, 1962, n.d.
BOX 2	Curtis, George William, 1875, 1948-1952, 1969, n.d.
	"C" miscellaneous, 1877, 1948-1953, 1970
	Dana, Charles Anderson, 1924
	Dickens, Charles, 1951
	Downing, Alexander Jackson, ca. 1895, 1949-1955, n.d.
	Earth closets, 1869
	Errington, Harriet, 1951-1952
	Expositions
	World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, Ill. (1893), 1890-1894, 1957, 1975, n.d.
	World's Fair, New York, N.Y. (ca. 1892), 1869-1889
	Gardening, 1886, n.d.
	Godkin, Edward Lawrence, 1942, 1950-1951
	Green, Andrew Haswell, n.d.
	"G" miscellaneous, 1948-1949, 1967, n.d.

Honors, 1892-1893, 1898, 1928-1929

Hurlbert, William Henry, 1950

"H" miscellaneous, 1948-1952, n.d.

Illustrations, n.d.

Interviews with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., 1948-1952, n.d.

Knapp, Frederick N., ca. 1864, 1957, n.d.

"K" miscellaneous, 1948-1949

Landscape architecture

Bibliography, 1921, 1927, 1946, n.d.

California, ca. 1870, 1947, n.d.

Education, 1882

History, 1886, 1906, 1921, 1943-1950, 1957, n.d.

Terminology, 1860, 1875, 1924, 1949, 1963

"L" miscellaneous, 1951-1952

Martin, William R., 1877

Nation, 1867, 1949-1950, n.d.

Newspaper clippings, 1855-156

Nurseries, 1874-1887, 1912

"N" miscellaneous, 1887, 1914, 1950

Olmsted, Frederick Law, Jr., 1894, 1919, 1929, 1936-1938, 1944-1949, 1957, n.d.

Olmsted, Gideon, ca. 1855, 1955

Olmsted, John Charles, 1920, n.d.

Olmsted, Mary Cleveland Perkins, 1847, 1921, n.d.

Parks

Architectural structures, ca. 1890

Baltimore, Md., 1876, 1968

Boston, Mass., 1879-1886, 1891-1895, 1924-1926, 1964-1965

Brooklyn, N.Y., 1874, 1903, 1967-1969, 1973-1974

Buffalo, N.Y., 1868-1869, 1877, 1887-1889, n.d.

Chicago, Ill., 1889

Detroit, Mich., 1881, 1887

General, 1897, n.d.

Haddam, Conn., 1941, 1955-1956

Hartford, Conn., ca. 1870, 1890

Hot Springs, Ark., 1893

London, England, 1834, 1883, 1891, 1916, 1962

Louisville, Ky., 1891

New York, N.Y.

Articles and newspapers clippings, 1857-1860, 1875, 1880-1885, 1892, 1910, 1917, 1926-1930, 1951-1953, 1973, 1977, n.d.

Correspondence, 1860, 1869, 1883, 1922, 1927-1928, 1949, n.d.

Reports, indices, 1857-1870, 1966, n.d.

Riverside Park, 1874-1875, 1925

New Orleans, La., 1900

Newark, N.J., 1927

Newburgh, N.Y., 1889

BOX 3

BOX 4 Niagara, N.Y., 1879-1883, 1887-1893

San Francisco, Calif., 1866-1869, 1886-1887, 1927, 1949, 1953, 1965, n.d.

Montreal, Que., 1876-1881, 1967, n.d.

Saint Catherine's, Ont., 1887

Washington, D.C., 1941, 1953

Yosemite, Calif., 1864-1866, 1890, 1913, 1921, 1948, 1952, 1962

Parmentier, André, 1950-1951

Partnerships, 1872, 1952, 1961

Portraits and silhouettes, n.d.

Private estates

Asheville, N.C., 1890-1893, 1949, 1982, n.d.

England, 1973, n.d.

Mariposa, Calif., 1876, 1949-1951, 1959, n.d.

Professional procedures, 1883

Progress and advancement, 1851, 1864

Publishing firm, 1949

Raymond, Henry J., 1948

Renwick, James, 1959

Residences, 1873, 1896, 1936, 1956, n.d.

Richardson, Henry Hobson, 1951, 1958, 1962, 1970-1972

Riotte, Charles N., 1949

Robinson, William, 1948-1951

Russel[1?] [William Howard?] (correspondent), 1863

Schurz, Carl, 1952, 1972

Schuyler, Louisa Lee, 1950

Shurcliff, Arthur A., reminiscences of Olmsted, 1952

Speeches and statements, 1975-1982

(8 folders)

Spoils of the Park, 1882

Stanford, Leland, Jr., 1882

State Charities Aid Association, 1938, n.d.

"S" miscellaneous, 1950, n.d.

Turnpikes, 1864

"T" miscellaneous, 1927, 1949, 1963

Universities and colleges

Stanford University, Stanford, Calif., 1887-1893, 1957

University of California, Berkeley, Calif., 1874, n.d.

Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., 1921, 1948

Vaux, Calvert, 1876-1877, 1894, 1920, 1952

Viele, Egbert L., 1861-1864, 1883, 1923

Waring, George E., Jr., 1948

Weidenmann, Jacob, ca. 1884, 1946-1950

Works by Olmsted, 1893, 1971

Writings, ca. 1910-ca. 1949

(2 folders)

BOX 5

	"W" miscellaneous, 1894-1976, n.d.
BOX 5-6	Olmsted Associates, 1894-1958, n.d.
BOA 3-0	Correspondence and associated reports, newspaper clippings, and printed matter.
	Arranged chronologically.
BOX 5	1894-1943
	(2 folders)
вох 6	1944-1958, n.d.
	(3 folders)
вох 7-17	Indices to Frederick Law Olmsted Papers, 1865-1928, n.d.
вох 7-11	Chronological Index, 1865-1928
	Card file arranged chronologically for the years 1865-1896, 1903-1904, 1912, 1916, 1920-1921 and 1928.
	A microfilm edition of this index is limited to the years 1865 and 1876-1887 (see below).
вох 7	25 Nov. 1865-28 Aug. 1871
BOX 8	10 Sept. 1871-29 Feb. 1876
BOX 9	3 Mar. 1876-2 June 1881
BOX 10	2 June 1881-13 Feb. 1887
BOX 11	25 Feb. 1887-21 Aug. 1928
вох 12-15	Subject Index, n.d.
	See Appendix for major subject list.
	Card file arranged alphabetically by subject, name, and place category and thereunder by subcategories.
вох 12	"A-O" miscellaneous
	Olmsted firms
	"A" miscellaneous
вох 13	"A-Z" miscellaneous (excluding "O")
	"O" miscellaneous
	Olmsted, Frederick Law
	Advice on investments
BOX 14	Job offers
	Olmsted family "P" miscellaneous
вох 15	"P-Z" miscellaneous
BOX 13	Unidentified
	Cindentified
вох 15-17	Correspondent Index, n.d.
	Card file of correspondents arranged alphabetically by name of writer or recipient. A microfilm edition of this index is limited to the letters "A-N" and first part of "O" (see below).
вох 15	A-C
вох 16	C-P

Indices to Frederick Law Olmsted Papers, 1865-1928, n.d.

Container	Contents
вох 17	P-Z
вох 17	Personal Name Index, n.d.
	Card file of personal names referred to in correspondence, arranged alphabetically by name of person.
	This index has not been microfilmed.
вох 17	A-Z
REEL 1-9	Microfilm, 1822-1887, n.d.
	Microfilm of part of the chronological and correspondent indices to the Frederick Law Olmsted papers and all of the subject and personal name indices. Also microfilm of a secondary source reference file which is not contained in the papers. Shelf number 21,458.
reel 1	Indices to the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers, 1871-1887, n.d.
	Chronological Index
	1 Sept. 1871-25 Feb. 1881
REEL 2	1 Mar. 1881-13 Feb. 1887
REEL 3	Subject Index, n.d.
	See Appendix for major subject list.
	A-O
REEL 4	O-P
REEL 5	P-Z
	Correspondent Index, n.d.
	A-P
REEL 6	Secondary sources reference file, 1822-1864, n.d.
	1822-1859
REEL 7	1860-1863
REEL 8	1864, n.d.
REEL 9	Undated

Appendix: Headings Used in Card File Subject Index

Listed exactly as arranged, which is generally alphabetically:

- Accounting
- · Agricultural societies, congresses, etc.
- Allston's self-portrait
- · American Academy of Political and Social Science
- American Institute of Architects
- American Association for the Advancement of Science
- American Forestry Association
- American Institute of Architects
- American Meteorological Society
- American Social Science Association
- Appeals and pressure for money, jobs, advice, and influence
- Aquaria
- Arboreta [by name]
- Architects and artists
- Arsenals and military establishment
- Art, architecture, and ornament
- Birds [by type]
- Blue Anchor Society
- Boats
- · Books on landscape architecture and gardening
- Boston Coop Building Co.
- Boston Society of Civil Engineers
- Boston Memorial Association
- Boston Society of Architects
- Botanical gardens
- Brazil
- Brookline, Mass.
- Brooklyn Bridge, New York, N.Y.
- Brooks Vale
- Buffalo, N.Y.
- Building materials and methods
- Bussey Institute for Horticulture
- Capitols [by place]
- Carpet bedding
- Cemeteries
- Census bulletins
- Charities
- · Chicago, Ill.
- Chicago Academy of Design
- Churches and cathedrals
- City planning
- Civil service reform
- Clubs [by name]
- Colleges and universities
- Competitions
- Conservation and preservation
- Cooperative Colony Aid Association
- Copyright
- Country club membership
- Cyclopedias [by name]
- Deer Isle, Me.

- District of Columbia
- Dix & Edwards, Inc.
- Drains and drainage
- Earth closets
- Education
- Emerson house
- Engineers
- England
- Erie Canal
- Evaporation
- Expositions
- Fences
- Fertilizer
- Fires [by city]
- Fish and fisheries
- Flush tanks
- Forests and forestries
- France
- Freedmen's Bureau
- · Free trade
- Gardens and gardening
- Geological surveys
- Governor's Island, N.Y.
- Gravel
- · Gravetye, England
- Handbook for Visitors to Poorhouse
- Health and health associations
- Historical societies
- Hospitals [by name]
- Hotels, beaches, and resorts
- Housing
- Humane Society
- Iceland
- Immigration
- International Arbitration and Peace Association
- Introductions
- Iron work
- Inventions
- Japan
- Jeffersonville, Ind.
- Johnson's Illustrated Universal Cyclopaedia
- Kew, England
- Labor and laborers
- Landscape architecture--Legislation, lighting, libraries, livestock, lodging houses
- Loyal Legion, Mass. Commandery of
- Malaria
- Malden Library, Malden, Mass.
- Marblehead
- Mariposa mining estates, Calif.
- Metropolitan Public Gardens Assn.
- Mines
- Model Yacht Club
- Montauk Association
- Monuments, memorials, statues, fountains, etc.

- Morgan (J. P.) & Co, Inc.
- Morocco
- · Muddy River
- Museums
- Music
- National Association of Sanitary and Rural Development
- Natural History Society
- Negroes
- New England Emigrant Aid Society
- New Hampshire Forestry Commission
- New Haven, Conn.
- Newport, R. I.
- Newspapers [by city and name]
- New York
- · Nicaragua Association for Improvement of the Condition of the Poor
- New York Board of Health
- New York Infant Asylum
- New York State Bar Association
- New York State Charities Aid Assn.
- Nomenclature
- · Norfolk, Va.
- Nurseries
- Oil in California
- Old South Museum
- Orleans County, N.Y. poorhouse
- Oyster shell lime
- [?] development
- Olmsted firms [correspondence]
- "A"-"N." "P"-Z"
- "O" (excluding Olmsteds)
- Olmsted, Frederick Law--Advice to; autographs; biographical data, character, standing, and appreciation; clubs, associations, honorary degrees, etc.; consulship; current work; domestic affairs; estimate of own work and of self; expert witness; Farm, S. I.; fees and income; gifts, donations, loans; health; inventions; investments; job offers; litigations; mention in publications; offices held; open eyed sleep; pets; photographs and portraits; plans, hopes, etc.; professional procedure; public office; religion; residence; royalties; speeches, articles, etc.; Sunday question; use of name; whereabouts
- Olmsted, Frederick Law, Jr.
- Olmsted, John
- Olmsted, John Charles
- · Olmsted, John Hull
- Olmsted, John Theodore
- Olmsted, M. [Mary or Marion]
- Olmsted, Mary Ann
- Olmsted, Mary Cleveland Bryant
- Olmsted, Owen Frederick
- Olmsted, Owen Pitkin
- · Olmsted firms and associations
- Olmsted genealogy and letters
- Panics
- Pantographs
- · Parades and parade grounds
- Parks
- Park commissions
- · Park police

- Parks--use of; value of; [by place]
- Periodicals--Garden and Forest; Nation; New Examiner
- Photosculpture
- Plant material
- Plants [by name]
- · Play grounds
- Politics
- Ponds and pond gardening
- Population
- Prisons and prison associations
- Private places [by estate title and by name of owner]
- Pumps
- · Railroads
- Rapid transit
- Recreation
- · Redwoods
- Residential development [by state and province]
- Riding
- Roads and streets [by place]
- Rockery
- Rocky Mountain Cattle Co.
- Rugby
- St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railway Co.
- Sanitation
- Sanitary Commission
- Scenery [by place]
- · Schools
- Scribner's and Sons, Inc.
- Sea islands, Port Royal Sound, S. C.
- Sewage and drainage
- Sherwood Land Co.
- Siemen Brothers, Inc.
- Slavery
- Small [ship S.S. Wilson Small]
- Social statistics
- Society, progress, etc.
- Social commentary
- South, the
- Southern Famine Relief Commission
- Spain
- Speedways
- Spiritualism
- Sports and exercise
- Staten Island, N.Y.
- Stevens Institute
- Stockbridge, Mass.
- Strikes
- Suburban [?]
- Summit, N.J.
- Tammany Hall
- Tariffs
- Telephones
- Terraces
- Toledo, Ohio

- Tools, machines, materials, etc.
- Trees [by type]
- Tree cutting
- Tree planting
- U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey
- U. S. Hot Springs [Ark.] Commission
- U. S. War Department
- War
- Urinals
- Ventilation
- Versailles, France
- Village improvement and societies
- Wages
- Walls
- Waterbury, Conn.
- Watercourses
- Water closets
- Water supply
- Webster [ship S.S. Daniel Webster]
- Windmills
- Windsor Terrace, N.Y.
- Wine
- Winter gardens
- Women
- Women's Central Relief Association
- Women's congress
- Woods